



John Edward Bald

June 25, 1936 - June 18, 2026

John Bald, one week shy of his 90th birthday, and a long-time resident of Bloomington, MN, passed away on June 18, 2026. He was preceded in death by his parents, Vincent and Nora, three brothers (Paul, George & Bobby) and three sisters (Rosemary, Francis & Rita).

John grew up in Wahpeton, ND, the second child of eleven, where he developed a strong interest in anything mechanical or electrical. His first job was in an automotive/motorcycle repair shop which naturally led to his purchase of a 1949 Harley-Davidson. In his senior year of high school, he met Diane Echelberger of nearby Fergus Falls, and the adventures began.

John attended St. John's University for two years before deciding college was not for him and he landed a position at Univac in Minneapolis. Prior to moving to the big city, he asked Diane to marry him after she graduated High School. At the tender ages of 20 and 17, they were married on June 30, 1956, with John selling his motorcycle to buy a wedding ring. They purchased their first (and only) home in Bloomington early in 1957 and then had four children in the next six years to complete the family.

After working for a couple of small 2-way radio repair and installation companies, John spent the bulk of his career with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department. He became an expert in developing, installing, and

repairing communications equipment for law enforcement and emergency response systems. John was an instrumental player in developing the 911 system for the Twin Cities area, and he served on the Technical Operations Committee representing Hennepin County Sheriff's Department.

John was a quiet man who worked hard to provide for his family. In addition to his full-time job, he provided his technical expertise to two successful start-up companies; one dealing with home alarm systems and the other becoming Minnesota's largest pager company (remember pagers?).

John also chaired the Twin Cities PC Club, running the server from his basement and scheduling speakers for the monthly meetings. One of the speakers impressed John so much that he invited the man back for a second meeting, including dinner. In his understated manner, all John said was, "He was a sharp young fellow." Guess so! He was Bill Gates.

The adventurous side of John showed in his love for boating the Mississippi River system in the summer and snowmobiling throughout Minnesota in the winter. He took a pleasure boat trip from St. Paul to New Orleans on the Mississippi, and another trip from Chicago to Bloomington via the Illinois, Mississippi, and Minnesota rivers. His winter trips centered on Minnesota State Parks and his annual Crane Lake to Atikokan, Canada, run with Diane and their friends Fred & Corrine. An impressive feat in the early 1970's.

Spending time at the cabin on Pickerel Lake in Otter Tail County brought John great satisfaction, as there was an unending number of projects to keep him busy. After retirement John was at the cabin from early May through October. It became the gathering spot for his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, as well as aunts, uncles, and cousins. We all cherished cabin time together and built great memories.

John is survived by his wife of nearly 70 years, Diane (Echelberger): children Bruce (Barbara), Steve (Carmen), Janice (Gary) Kwiatkowski, Jackie (David) Schouvieller; ten grandchildren & twenty-one great-grandchildren

Private family memorial service.

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Dawn Valley Chapel 952-941-7686